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STAR WARS™

THE OFFICIAL STARSHIPS & VEHICLES COLLECTION

THE A-WING

7

Rebel general's secret weapon

Rebel commandos

The Ewoks of Endor

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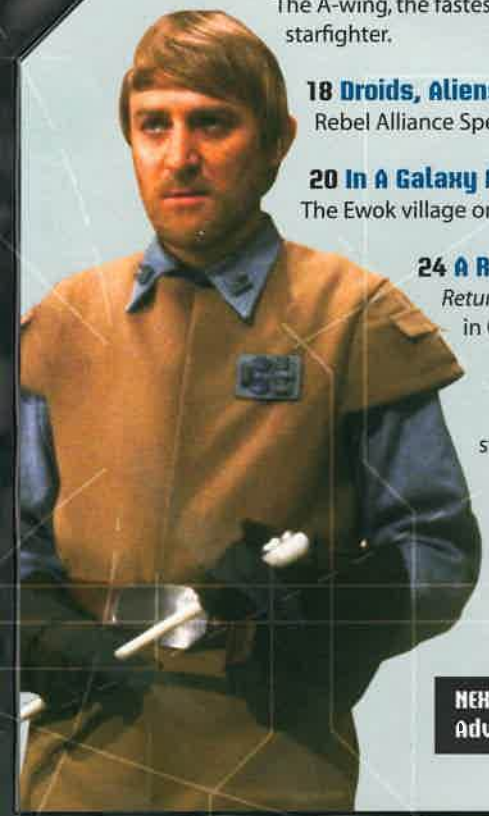

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Packaged by Continuo Creative
39-41 North Road,
London N7 9DP

ISBN: 0 7489 3398 0
N07 08 12 17

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Griffin House,
161 Hammersmith Road,
London W6 8SD

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Printed in the EU

STAR WARS

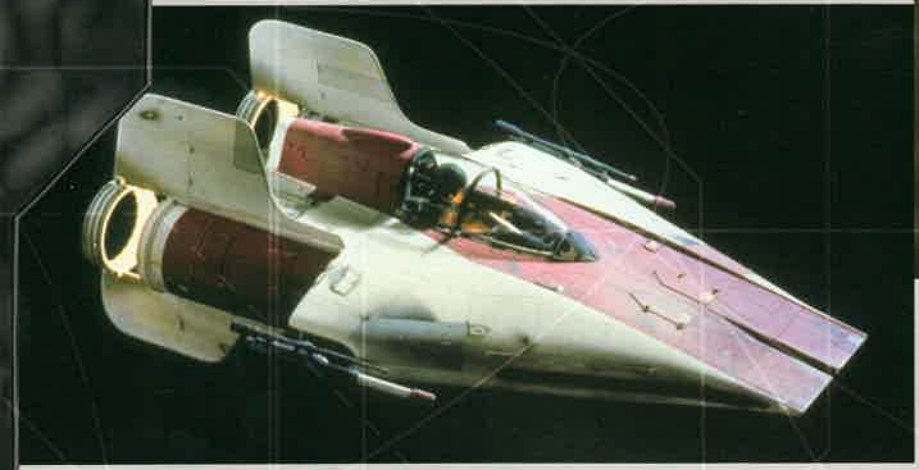
For a long time, the sleek, wedge-shaped A-wing was the fastest starfighter in the galaxy. Small, with a cramped cockpit between two huge engines, flying an A-wing required the utmost concentration from its pilot. One mistake and the vulnerable craft was so much scrap metal!

'INTENSIFY THE FORWARD BATTERIES. I DON'T WANT ANYTHING TO GET THROUGH'

ADMIRAL PIETT

THE LEGEND
OF THE A-WING STARFIGHTER

The A-wing was designed by the same engineer who created the Jedi starfighters. But while Jedi used the Force to help guide their ships, the Rebel pilots had to rely on normal human skills.



After the Battle of Yavin, both Rebel and Imperial tacticians realised the importance speed had played. Tough and nimble X-wings had long been striking Imperial targets and fleeing before they could be caught. To counter them, Imperial designers came up with the TIE interceptor. On the Rebel side, concern that three TIE fighters had been able to scramble a co-ordinated, and near-fatal response before the attack could be punched home led General Jan Dodonna and his tacticians to realise the need for a dedicated interceptor fighter. Fortunately, the Alliance had Walex Blissex, who had worked on the Delta-7 *Aethersprite* and Eta-2 *Actis* Jedi starfighters.

A Need For Speed

The Alliance could not provide the funding the A-wing designers would have preferred, so the ships were constructed entirely from components already available to the beleaguered Rebels. Nevertheless, the results were impressive. The A-wing essentially straps its pilot between two comparatively massive Novaldex J-77 Event Horizon engines. To counter the ship's ultra-sensitive controls, the pilot only has the help of a

Macroaxial LpL-449 navigation computer and a Fabritech ANs-7e sensor system, as there's no space for an astromech droid.

Hidden Surprise

The A-wing was designed as an interceptor – an escort vessel capable of quickly moving to intercept and neutralise incoming threats. However, the Alliance was never in the position of being able to devote resources to single-function fighters. The A-wing was able to perform as an effective hit-and-fade fighter. It was relatively heavily armed for its compact size, sporting twin concussion missile launchers and two laser cannons.

The A-wing had another surprise hidden in its already cramped innards – a Miradyne 4x-Phantom jammer. This utterly scrambles sensors in a considerable area, making it very difficult to organise an effective response. Unfortunately, a capital ship or larger station can break the jamming and very easily track its source – the very vulnerable A-wing.

NO EASY RIDE

The initial A-wings were not mass produced – the Alliance simply didn't have the resources. They were assembled by hand, using recycled, heavily used and improvised parts. Rogue Squadron pilot Tycho Celchu's A-wing at the Battle of Endor had a cockpit lined with wood. The sensitive controls, terrible maintenance record and relatively weak shielding gave A-wing pilots a reputation for near-suicidal bravery. However, the A-wing was enough of a success for a second generation of the craft to enter mass production shortly after the Battle of Endor.

ATTACK!
THE BATTLE OF ENDOR

A battle can hang on a moment – a single event that can bring victory or disaster. At Endor, that moment came with the heroic actions of a lone A-wing pilot.

The Rebel Alliance's plan to attack the second Death Star with the Emperor on board appeared to be in tatters. The battle station was incomplete, and all reports said it was protected by only a defence shield generated from the forest moon below. However, a strike team, led by General Han Solo, Leia Organa and Luke Skywalker, had failed to take down the shield before the Rebels launched their assault and came under a surprise attack from a massive Imperial fleet.

Into Battle

As the Rebel fleet was caught in the Emperor's trap, the Ewoks of Endor gave Han's team the chance to destroy the

'Any pilot who volunteers to fly an A-wing better be brave or crazy. Probably helps to be a little of both.'

Han Solo

shield generator. Although Lando Calrissian was able to penetrate the superstructure of the station, the fate of the remaining Rebels was looking grim.

Heroic Action

The Super Star Destroyer *Executor* was the flagship of the Imperial fleet and Rebel Admiral Ackbar ordered his fleet to concentrate fire on her as an A-wing flight joined the battle. With *Executor*'s shields down, a dying A-wing pilot, Arvel Crynyd, guided his crippled craft directly into the bridge of the Star Destroyer. The wounded ship crashed into the Death Star and was destroyed.

The morale of the Imperial fleet was rocked by the loss of *Executor*, and then broken completely by the death of the Emperor and the destruction of the Death Star minutes later. The fleet retreated, and the Rebels carried the day!

GENERAL CRIX MADINE

A STRICT MILITARY DISCIPLINARIAN

General Crix Madine was a key operative for the Rebel Alliance. His knowledge of Imperial counter-insurgency techniques and the tactics of its best commando units was unrivalled. This was because he had created them in the first place in the days when he had been an Imperial officer.

There is a misconception that those who joined the Empire understood what it stood for and should be condemned accordingly. In the early days, certainly, this was not the case, and the Imperial propaganda machine duped many thereafter. Palpatine rose to power and maintained that position by carefully manipulating those around him. The galaxy was in chaos; disorder and violence were rife and nobody knew that Palpatine himself was the instigator. Even as he sought to bring the galaxy into conflict, he promised many that his rule would lead to an end to that conflict.

Corellian military man Crix Madine graduated from the Imperial Academy and quickly rose through the ranks of the Imperial Army. A gifted tactician, he was, in many ways, the perfect addition to the ranks of Palpatine's New Order. He valued peace and justice, and believed the propaganda the Empire spewed out about the atrocities committed by the Rebellion.

Madine even formed the Storm Commandos – the most feared Imperial counter-insurgency group, who scored many victories against the Alliance.

Fight For Freedom

However, Madine eventually learned the truth about the oppressive Empire he now served. Eventually, he could take no more. He turned, becoming an invaluable Alliance informer. On the eve of his final defection, he was captured by General Rom Mohc and incarcerated in the seemingly impregnable prison complex on

Crix Madine: one of many former Imperials who defected when the true nature of Palpatine's rule became apparent.

PROFILE

Affiliation
Empire, Imperial Army, Death Squadron

Birth planet
Axxila

Height
1.65 metres

Weapon
Blaster pistol

Orinackra. But Madine's capture had not gone unnoticed. Mon Mothma, leader of the Alliance, sent one of her top agents to free Madine. Armed with not much more than luck and a maintenance schematic of the repulsorlift elevator system, Kyle Katarn freed Madine.

However, Crix Madine was not safe yet. The Empire caught up with him on Corellia and decided to make an unnecessarily large, if spectacular, operation out of his

recapture – something for the propaganda machine to play with. However, Rogue Squadron managed to steal the Empire's show, driving off the attackers and seeing Madine to safety.

A Rebel Leader

With the backing of Mon Mothma and of General Carlist Rieekan, Madine was (not without some resistance) accepted into the ranks of the Alliance. He was given the role of Chief Military Advisor in Mon Mothma's Advisory Council. Immediately, he set about righting some of the wrongs he had unwittingly perpetrated. His insider knowledge of the very tactics he had helped to create was to be a powerful weapon against the Empire, and any doubts about his loyalty were quickly squashed.

Madine's Strategy

To counter the Empire, with its vast resources and huge numbers of troops, Madine came up with a number of rules for ground engagements. The first of these was that the Alliance should never attempt to go toe-to-toe with the Empire, attempting to match forces strength to strength. He stressed guerrilla hit-and-fade tactics, similar in many ways to those used by the Alliance starfighter pilots.

Madine's strategy was to be put to the ultimate test when the Alliance discovered a second Death Star station was being constructed. Overcoming Mon Mothma's reluctance at his

Madine did not finally defect to the Alliance until after the Battle of Yavin, when his conscience could no longer allow him to remain a puppet of the Emperor's corrupt regime.

Respected leader

Madine's second rule of engagement spoke of the need for Alliance units to have high morale. This was one reason why he often led critical missions himself. It's also why he handed the Endor mission to General Solo – he knew that the presence of Solo, Leia Organa and Luke Skywalker would hugely boost morale on such a vital mission.

insistence that the Alliance should attempt to assassinate the Emperor at Endor, Madine was charged with the operation to bring down the shields protecting the partly built Death Star.

Though expected to lead the operation himself, Madine knew there was someone he could trust to do the job – General Han Solo. Using a shuttle stolen by one of Madine's many commando strike teams, Solo and the team he and Madine had hand-picked successfully managed to infiltrate the Imperial base on Endor. Solo's recognised abilities to improvise successfully under pressure, the reason Madine picked him, got the job done.

After Endor

For a long time after the Battle of Endor, General Crix Madine served the New Republic as Supreme Allied Commander for Intelligence, serving with distinction in the campaigns against Grand Admiral Thrawn.

Unfortunately, his morale-boosting tendency to lead from the front was to eventually lead him to take one risk too many. Madine died during the ultimately successful operation to uncover and destroy the Hutt-built super weapon, Darksaber.

THE *HAVOC*

HEAVILY MODIFIED SCURRG H-6 BOMBER

The *Havoc* is the personal vessel of the Feeorin pirate Nym, leader of the Lok Revenants mercenaries. His highly modified experimental bomber has become one of the deadliest starfighters in the galaxy. Originally intended for a crew of five, it is adapted to allow Nym to pilot it solo.

Raised by criminals, Nym entered adulthood as a fierce fighter and brilliant tactician who soon attracted a band of fearsome followers and became the scourge of the space lanes. The speed and effectiveness of Nym's raids became legendary, aided in no small part by his *Havoc* bomber – one of the deadliest, and most experimental, starfighters in the galaxy.

The *Havoc* began life as a one-off prototype known as the Scurrg H-6, built by the Nubian Design Collective, who had plans to sell the new design to the Naboo. However, while the peaceful Naboo recognised the need for a defensive force of starfighters, they rejected the bomber, which was seen as being excessively armed.

Despite this setback, the bomber's chief designer, a Bith called Jinkins, continued to champion the project, but in the end the Nubian Design Collective abandoned the expensive development programme. When the prototype was mothballed, its frustrated designer sought out Nym and helped him to steal the bomber.

The Spoils Of Piracy

The *Havoc*'s speed, armour, shields, and onboard systems are impressive, but the vehicle's weapons set it far apart from all other starfighters. Six forward-facing laser cannons, arranged three to a wing, provide the foundation of this arsenal. Jinkins made numerous modifications to the *Havoc*, including equipping each weapons system with an independent targeting computer to allow Nym to fly the craft alone. As an enemy of the Trade Federation, Nym went on to participate in many important conflicts, including the Battle of Naboo and the Battle of Geonosis.

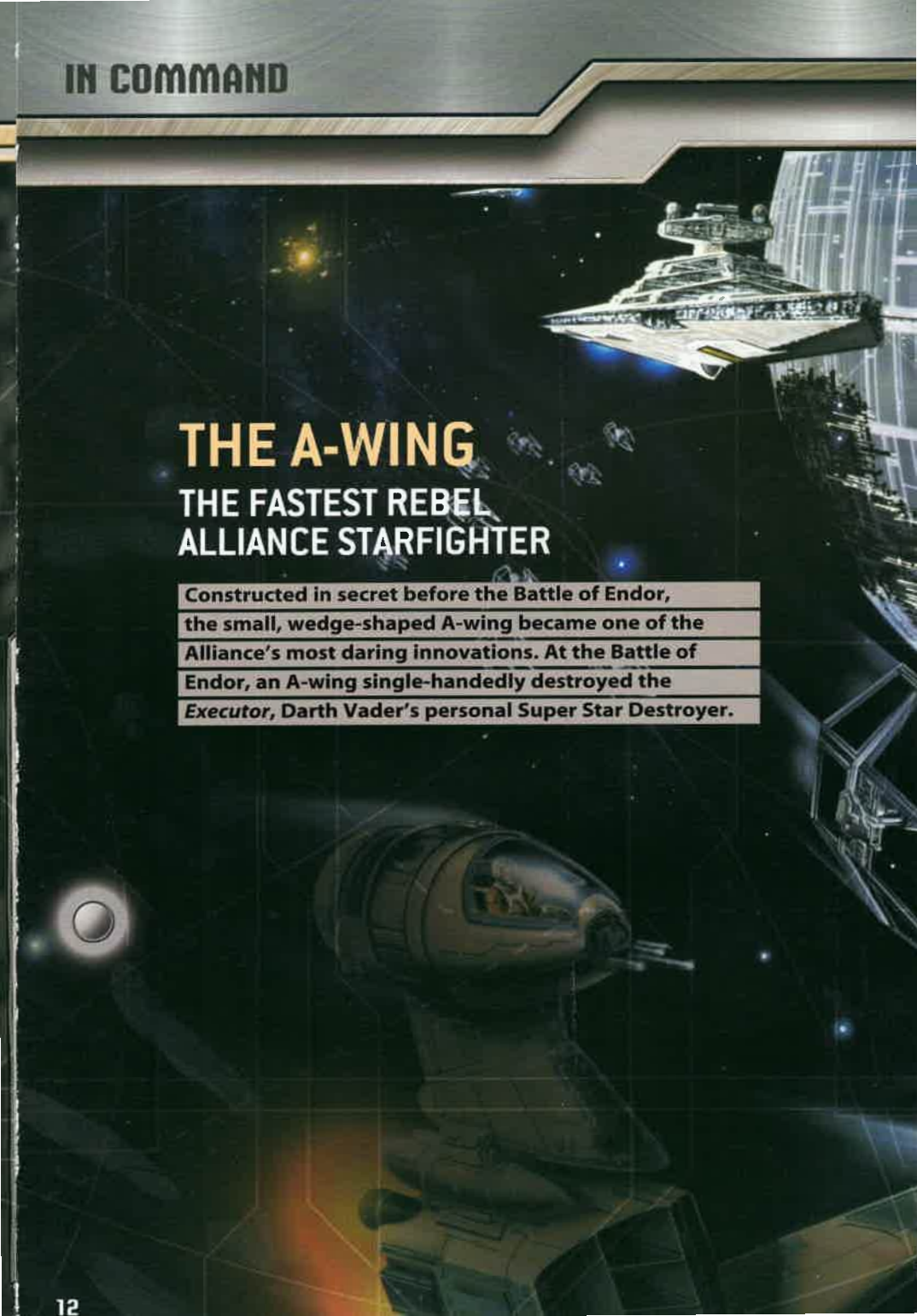
The *Havoc* Profile

Length
22 metres

Maximum speed
2,730 G/ Class 1.5 hyperdrive
1,000 km/h

Manufacturer
(Primary) Nubian Design Collective

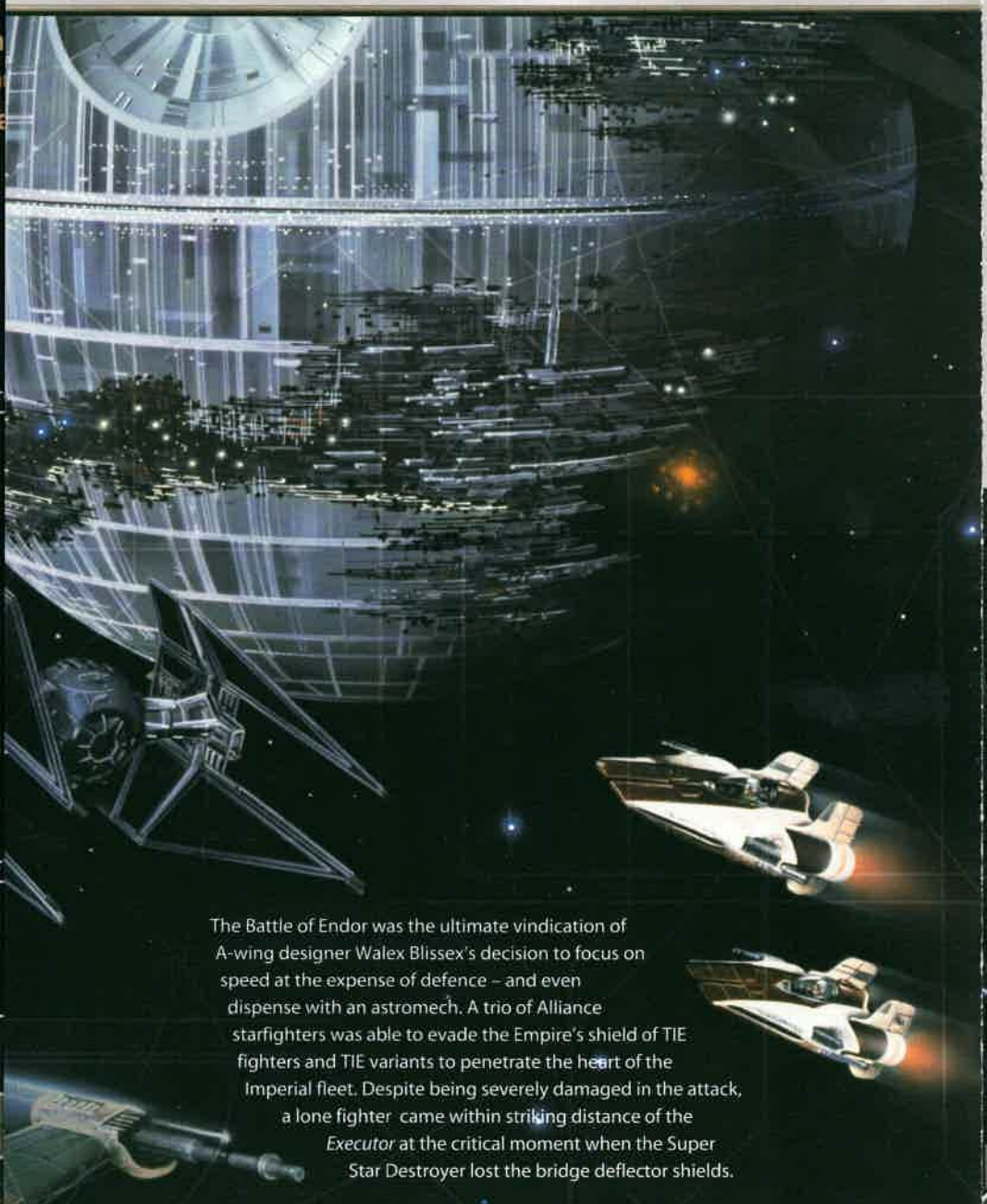
Affiliation
Lok Revenants



THE A-WING

THE FASTEST REBEL ALLIANCE STARFIGHTER

Constructed in secret before the Battle of Endor, the small, wedge-shaped A-wing became one of the Alliance's most daring innovations. At the Battle of Endor, an A-wing single-handedly destroyed the *Executor*, Darth Vader's personal Super Star Destroyer.



The Battle of Endor was the ultimate vindication of A-wing designer Walex Blissex's decision to focus on speed at the expense of defence – and even dispense with an astromech. A trio of Alliance starfighters was able to evade the Empire's shield of TIE fighters and TIE variants to penetrate the heart of the Imperial fleet. Despite being severely damaged in the attack, a lone fighter came within striking distance of the *Executor* at the critical moment when the Super Star Destroyer lost the bridge deflector shields.

THE A-WING STARFIGHTER

Type
Starfighter / interceptor

Model
RZ-1 A-wing starfighter

Length
9.6 metres

Power System
MPS BPr-99 power converter and fusion reactor

Propulsion Engines
Twin Novaldex J-77 Event Horizon engines (rated at 400 KTU)

Speed Rating
120 MGLT

Manufacturer
Dodonna-Blissex

Armament
Laser cannons, concussion missiles

Affiliation
Rebel Alliance

Crew
1 pilot

Adjustable stabiliser wing (4)

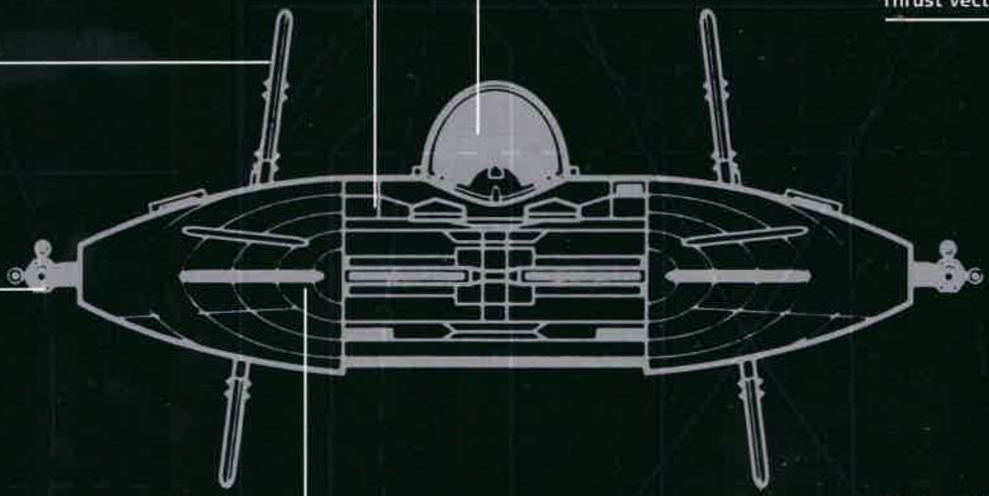
Borstel RG9 laser cannons (single fire or fire-linked)

**Flown by the Rebel Alliance for hit-and-fade mis
in the Galactic Civil War. Equipped with two wing
missile launchers, it has minimal deflector shie**

Single-seat cockpit. The A-wing lacks room for an astromech droid, which is used to provide in-flight repairs, hyperspace coordinates, and flight adjustments on other starfighters

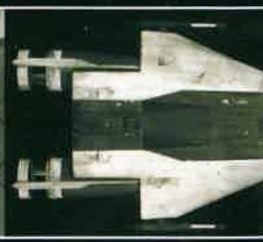
Shields/Armour: forward/ rear projecting Sirplex Z-9 shields (rated at 50 SBD) -

Thrust vector

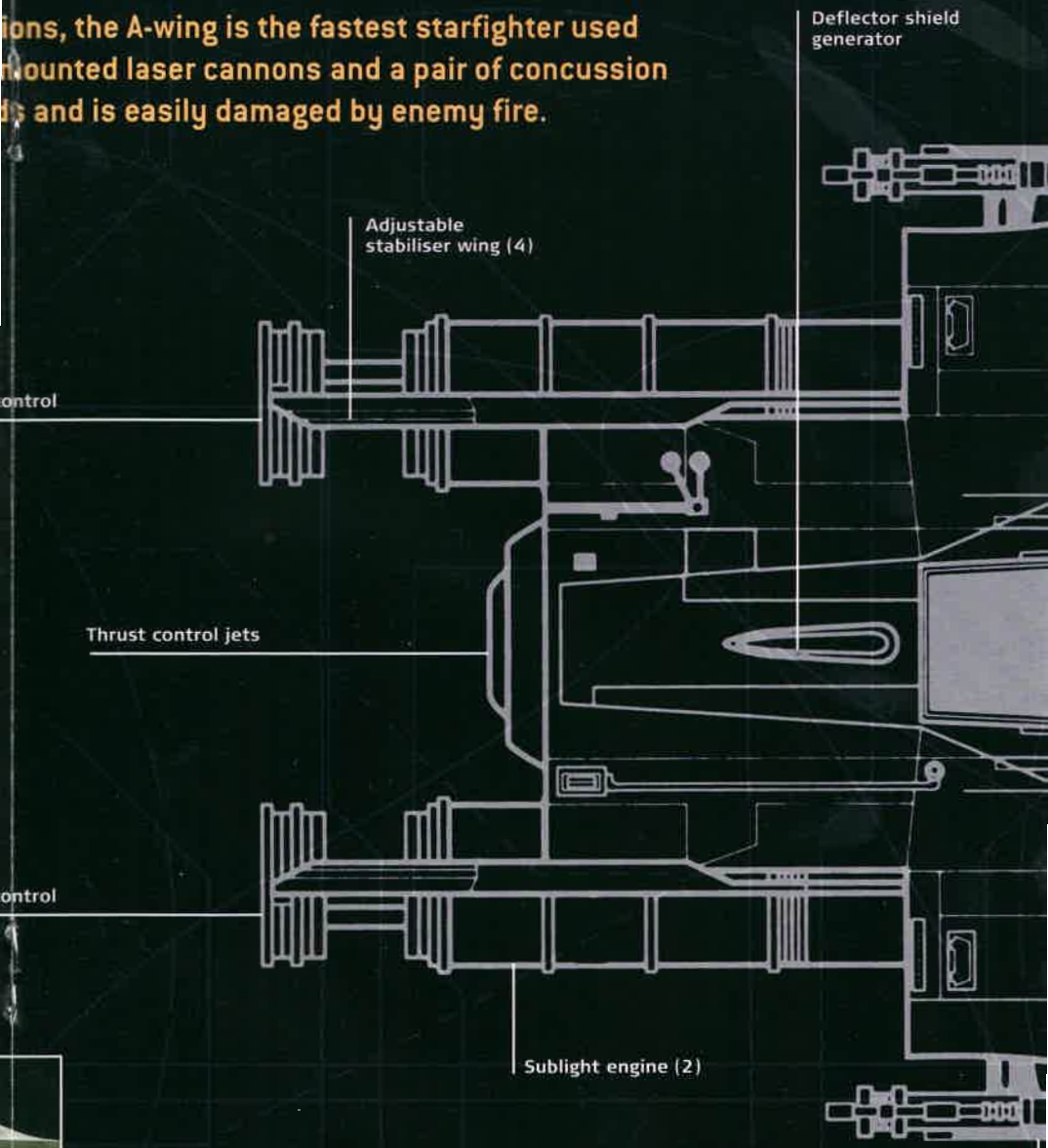


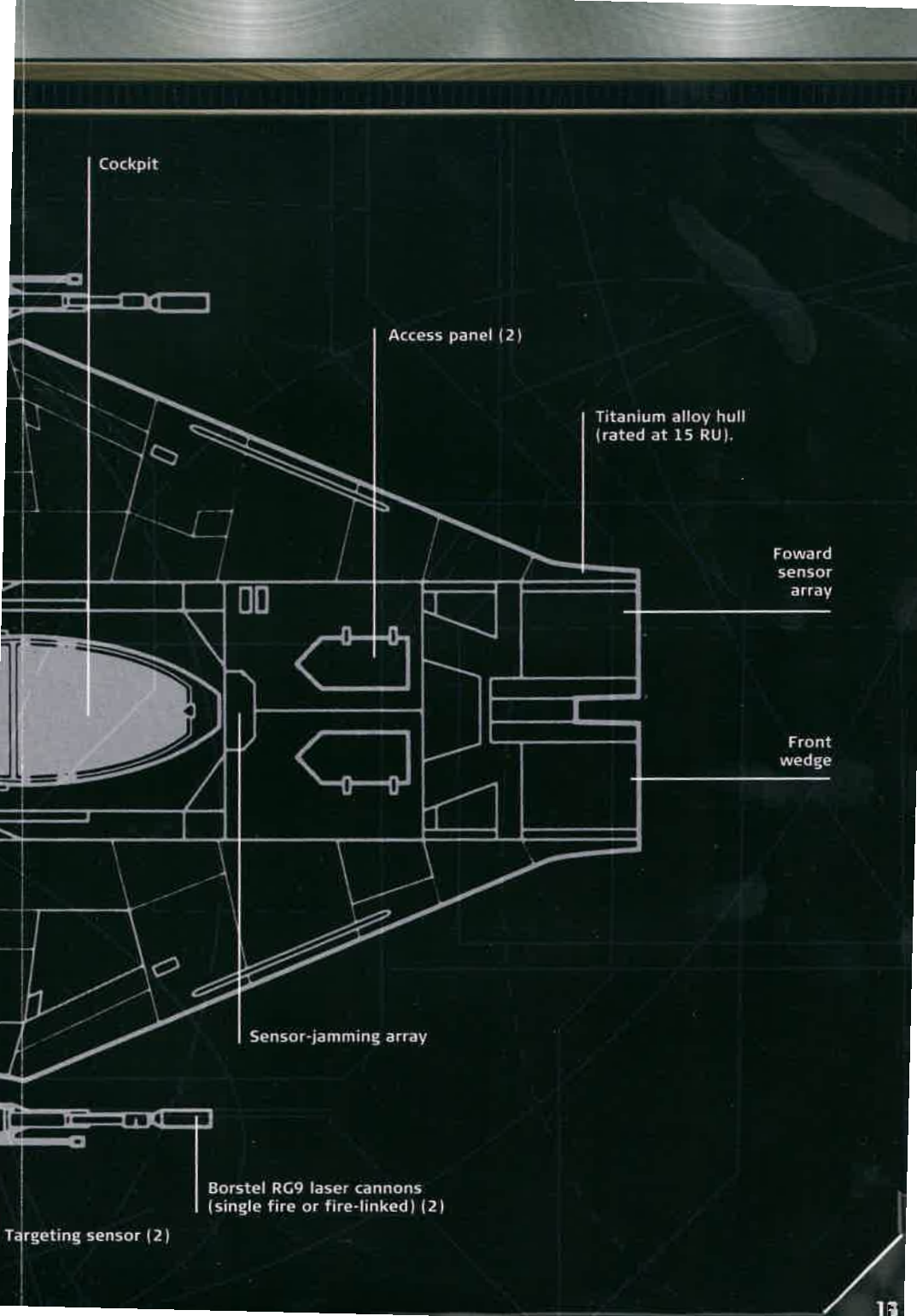
2 Dymek HM-6 concussion missile launchers (6 missiles each)

Thrust vector



ions, the A-wing is the fastest starfighter used
ounted laser cannons and a pair of concussion
; and is easily damaged by enemy fire.




Cockpit
Access panel (2)
Titanium alloy hull (rated at 15 RU).
Foward sensor array
Front wedge
Sensor-jamming array
Borstel RG9 laser cannons (single fire or fire-linked) (2)
Targeting sensor (2)

REBEL COMMANDOS

ALLIANCE SPECIAL FORCES

Before Crix Madine joined the Alliance, Rebel Special Forces (known as SpecForce) were often disorganised and demoralised. Madine's arrival changed all that, and he quickly gutted the organisation and reworked every aspect – from basic training to operational procedures.

General Madine's reorganising of the Alliance Special Forces initially did not make him popular in some command circles, particularly amongst those individuals who found themselves abruptly replaced and reassigned. The general barely noticed. He wasn't there to make friends but to create an efficient military organisation that would win the Alliance victories and strike fear into the hearts of Imperial commanders.

Organised Flexibility

Qualified SpecForce troops were organised into some 10 divisions. Each of these divisions was divided into seven regiments based on their specialities – Marines, Pathfinders, Urban Combat, Wilderness Fighters, Technicians, Infiltrators and Heavy Weapons Specialists.

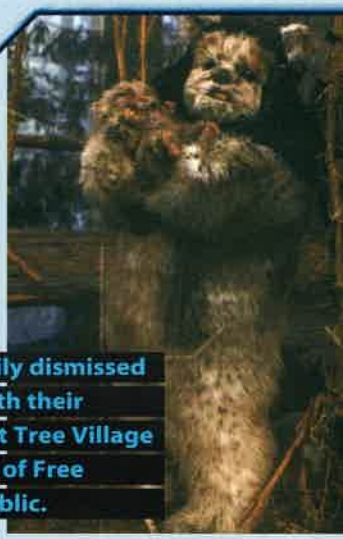
The divisions were deployed to various Alliance High Command sectors. However, unlike other Alliance forces, those in SpecForce never saw action as a complete regiment. Instead, the structure was more of a classification system that made it easier for sector command to draw the appropriate individual troops to create a dedicated unit, called a Taskforce, for a specific operation. Once the job was done, the surviving participants melted back into their regiments.

Security of the Shadows

Though Rebel Infiltrators needed the most security protection, all of the SpecForce troopers were covered by the same stringent security as regards their real identities. Even to gain admission to SpecForce recruitment training, those considered were given the most stringent background checks that resources allowed, and were interrogated by the best counter-intelligence operatives available. As a result, SpecForce had the lowest incidence of Imperial infiltration attempts in the Alliance military.

SpecForce Rangers

The SpecForce 4th Regiment Wilderness Fighters, or Rangers, were present at two of the most significant moments in Alliance history. They fought at Hoth, where their sacrifice helped to hold back the Imperial advance, while a Taskforce commanded by Han Solo brought down the second Death Star's shields at the Battle of Endor.



ENDOR
BRIGHT TREE VILLAGE

The Ewok people's treetop structures are easily dismissed as primitive, yet they are elegantly in sync with their environment. After the Battle of Endor, Bright Tree Village became the temporary capital of the Alliance of Free Planets – which would become the New Republic.

Many believe that the remarkable Ewoks live exclusively in the immense trees of Endor's sprawling forests. Though this is true of the majority, Ewoks also live in settlements that exploit the benefits of different terrains. There are villages on stilts in the still freshwater lakes, where Ewoks trap fish in wicker cages, and use craft propelled by both sails and paddles. One enterprising tribe settled on a cliff face by a waterfall, using the power of the rushing torrent to operate lifts, grinding stones and a variety of ingenious equipment. Lastly, there is a small number of settlements on the forest floor, though they are very few and far between.

Life In The Trees

The threats inherent with living on the forest floor, be they from marauding Dulok tribes or giant, simple-minded Gorax, make living high in the huge Soul Trees – as the Ewoks call them – a far safer option. Cunning traps and a network of vigilant scouts and look-outs keep the tree-top villages safe from most attackers.

Arboreal settlements normally follow a set pattern, often mirrored by the lake communities. The settlements radiate out from a central point called, appropriately, the Central Village. In Bright Tree, as elsewhere, these are where the largest huts lead out into a 'village square' – a wide outdoor meeting place made of interlocking logs often covered in compacted soil. Here, communal fires can be set for large feasts and other celebrations, and the village elders, chief and shaman can directly address the majority of the population.

In the Central Village, there is normally a large meeting hut, the chief's hut, big enough to host gatherings of the elders and key members of the population. In Bright Tree, Chief Chirpa's home was big enough to host the majority of the adult population of the village. Close by the chief's home are the homes of the

'I do believe they think I am some sort of god'
C-3PO

The Ewok Village

In an early draft of *Return of the Jedi*, the Ewoks lived in a settlement in an underground cavern – a far cry from the final version. The set used to film the Ewok village in the trees was constructed at Elstree Studios. Though many of the trees were fibreglass fakes, there were a number of real, living trees worked into the complex set. To better match the set to the real-world locations of the giant redwood forests, a cyclorama surrounded the set, painted to precisely match the skies shot on location. To finish the illusion, matte paintings were used to extend the scenery beyond what could practicably be built.

'The scouts are going to show us the quickest way to the shield generator.'

C-3PO

elders, along with their own meeting hut, and the shaman. The sealed and often guarded food storage huts are usually sited higher up above the Central Village.

Family Life

The family groups are the next huts out from the central point. While those in the Central Village butt right up against the trunk of the trees, and are occasionally hollowed out of the sacred trees themselves, it is not uncommon for those in the family groups to be more freestanding – built around branches, or out on platforms. Family huts are built by lone males who have decided to return to the village and chose a life-mate. Sometimes, the huts are built close to, or as part of, the family hut in which the male grew up. In other cases, the male will opt to build on the fringes of the family huts. In this way, the Ewok villages grow organically with the tribe.

Behind The Scenes

The genesis of the Ewoks came indirectly from an early draft of *Star Wars* Episode IV. In that draft, the technologically advanced Empire was defeated by the primitive Wookiees. By the time of *Return of the Jedi*, it had already been established that Chewbacca was an able mechanic and co-pilot. The Ewoks were created to reintroduce the theme of a woodland people, at peace with their environment, overthrowing the cruel, technology-dependent Empire.

RETURN OF THE JEDI

THE CORUSCANT CELEBRATION

Over 20 years after the original film's state-of-the-art special effects had brought stunning battle scenes to life, the Special Edition of *Return of the Jedi* used a whole new technology to treat fans to a vision of the aftermath of victory, in the galactic capital Coruscant.

For the 1997 release of the Special Edition of *Return of the Jedi*, George Lucas decided to expand on one of the key moments of the film by showing more of the galaxy-wide celebration of the death of the Emperor and the defeat of his forces at Endor. As well as seeing familiar locations like Tatooine and Bespin, fans were treated to their first glimpse of Coruscant – the heart of galactic civilisation.

Computer-generated technology had made significant changes to the two earlier films, but George Lucas said that, of the three original *Star Wars* films, *Return of the Jedi* required the smallest number of changes because it was more emotionally driven than the other two. Certainly, the introduction of Coruscant was one change that fans were to get very excited about.

An Important Introduction

Fans had long known about Coruscant, the city-world at the heart of the Empire. The Special Edition of *Return of the Jedi* would finally allow that world to be visualised beyond the few paintings that Ralph McQuarrie had done in the past. It was important to get this right for the future of the *Star Wars* story too, as Coruscant became central to the story to be told in the *Star Wars* prequels. In the end, it would take a full month to bring together all the elements that made up mere seconds of footage in the final film.

Combining Old And New

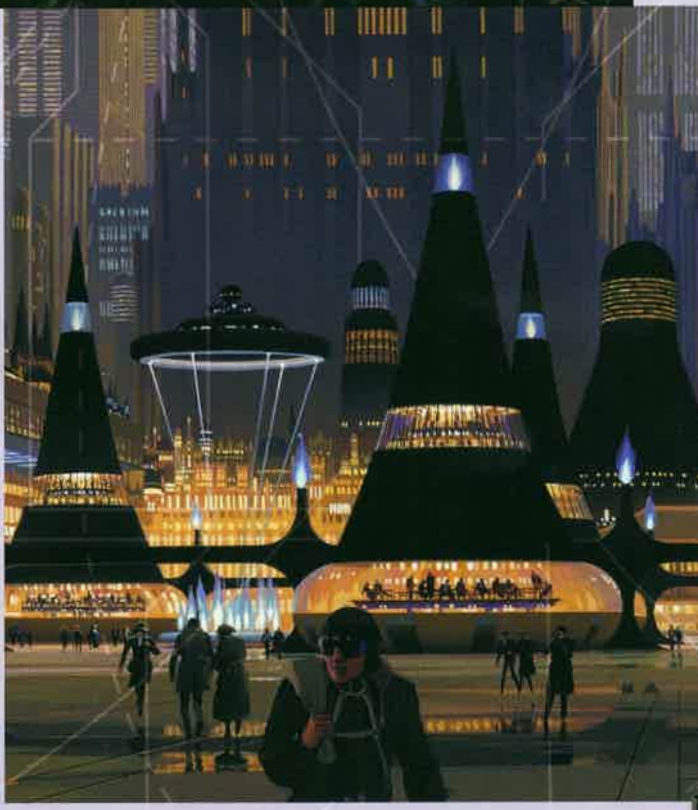
Other elements of the end celebration pioneered the techniques used. Bespin was recreated with a digital matte painting, computer-generated cloud cars and live-action extras shot against blue-screen. The same set-up was used to bring Mos Eisley to life. Even the

One vast city

Prior to its appearance in the Special Edition, Coruscant had been written about many times, but the only depictions of the sprawling city that had spread to cover the entire planet had been those visualised by the *Star Wars* design consultant and conceptual artist Ralph McQuarrie.

Ewok village was spruced up with new digital matte paintings.

Realising the Coruscant sequence was more complicated. The buildings were actual miniatures, photographed and then digitally enhanced. Behind them, the buildings stretching to the horizon are a digital matte painting. The 'air-bus' and landing platform were digitally created, along with the air taxis and the fluttering confetti. Lastly, the celebrating citizens are actors shot against a blue screen.

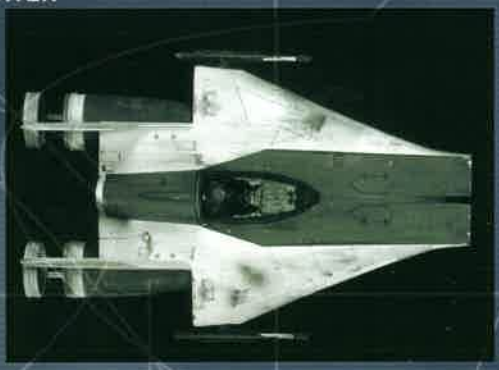


MODELLING THE A-WING

BRINGING THE VISION TO LIFE

EVOLUTION OF THE A-WING FIGHTER

1 The A-wing was one of two new starfighters created for *Return of the Jedi*. (The other new fighter to appear was the B-wing.)



2 The A-wing model developed for filming was built by Wesley Seeds and Lorne Peterson of Industrial Light & Magic.

5 Ralph McQuarrie's A-wing concept art showed the markings to be blue in colouration...

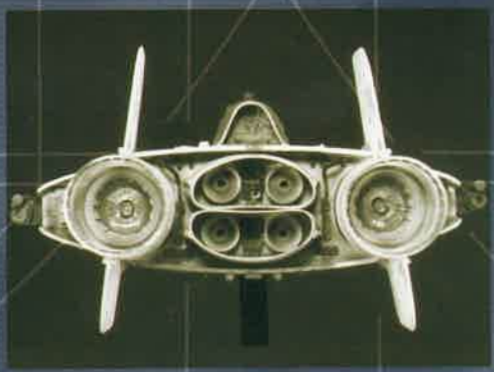
6 ... however, because of the limitations of blue-screen technology, this was changed to red.

Like the other starships used to depict space battles in the original trilogy, the A-wings were made as 3D models and filmed using blue-screen technology.

3 The model vessel's cramped cockpit included a pilot figurine that was actually based on a German airman from World War I.

4 A special helmet, including a prominent U-shaped headset, was created for the actors who would play A-wing pilots in close-ups.

7 A front view of the model A-wing shows how the pilot sits crammed between the twin engines.



8 A battle-scarred engine was also made. It snapped into place to represent a damaged fighter.

DID YOU KNOW?

1 ENDOR REFERS TO AN EXISTING WORD IN A WELL-KNOWN CLASSIC SCIENCE FICTION BOOK. WHICH ONE?

2 DID CRIX MADINE EVER FLY ON A REBEL STAR CRUISER?

3 THE FIRST EWOK LEIA ENCOUNTERS IS CALLED WICKET W. WARRICK. WHAT IS THE ORIGIN OF THE NAME "WARRICK"?

ANSWERS:

1 In J. R. R. Tolkien's fictional world of Arda, Endor is the Quenya name for the continent of Middle-earth. Endor (or Ein Dor) was also a Canaanite village where the Witch of Endor lived in the Bible.

2 A sequence of Madine commanding a Rebel star cruiser was filmed, but ultimately cut out of *Return of the Jedi*.

3 Warwick Davis was one of the actors. Warwick's performance as an Ewok impressed Lucas so much that he named the character (Wicket W. Warrick) after him.

B

Bubo

Alien
Episode IV

A creature that looked like a cross between a frog and a dog, with bulging eyes and a protruding lower jaw. Buboicullaar, or Bubo as he was known, was a spy and assassin in the palace of Jabba the Hutt on Tatooine. He frequently consulted with the B'omarr monks and plotted to kill Jabba. Few suspected that he was intelligent at all, and Bubo did nothing to contradict that assumption. Bubo foiled an assassination attempt on Jabba by Ree-Yees by eating a detonation link necessary for a bomb that Ree-Yees was constructing. After Jabba's death, Bubo's brain was removed by the B'omarrs, leaving him free to contemplate the mysteries of the universe unfettered by his body.

Sora Bulq

Character
Episode II

Sora Bulq was a Weequay Jedi and one of the taskforce of 200 dispatched to Geonosis to rescue a captured Obi-Wan Kenobi from Separatist forces. He was present during the deadly arena battle that ensued, and was one of the few survivors of that conflict.

Buzz Droid

Droid
Episode III

An insidious weapon unveiled by the Confederacy of Independent Systems during the later stages of the Clone Wars, buzz droids are tenacious saboteurs launched onto enemy starfighters via specialised missiles. When the missile achieves an optimum proximity to its target, it fragments to unleash a cloud of melon-sized metal spheres into the target's flight path. The spheres attach themselves to a target vessel, popping open to reveal an insectlike droid equipped with cutters and other tools of vandalism. The buzz droids are designed to disable, not destroy, enemy craft. They operate quickly, slicing into starship hulls and severing vital control linkages. While their tools are effective, they are relatively weak and vulnerable to damage. A hit to its central eye can knock a buzz droid out of commission.

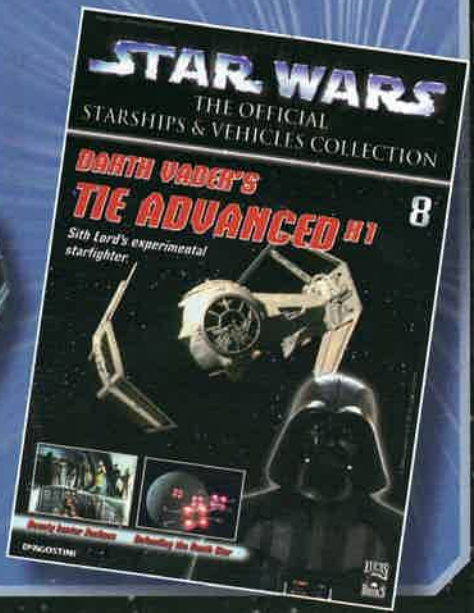
Byss

Planet

Located in the Outer Rim Territories. Home to the one-eyed Abyssin species. Byss is a hot, arid planet which travels in an unusual figure-of-eight orbit between the binary stars of Byss and Abyss. Temperatures reach their highest when the planet is orbiting directly between both stars, a time known as 'the Burning'. Most plant life on Byss utilises extensive taproots to extract underground water, while animals rely on scattered oases and their own water-storing capabilities.

IN THIS ISSUE

WITH ISSUE 7: THE A-WING STARFIGHTER

IN YOUR NEXT ISSUE

WITH ISSUE 8: DARTH VADER'S TIE ADVANCED X1